

I. Introduction

1. SETTING

Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace is home to a culturally and ethnically diverse group of residents. Residents exhibit a great deal of camaraderie and pride in their community. The area also has a large base of committed volunteers, who enthusiastically plan and initiate improvements. Within the area, there is broad agreement that streets, parks and City services need to be improved, and that change that is initiated privately should contribute to the community's livability.

A number of distinct residential neighborhoods and commercial districts comprise Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace. The East Santa Clara – Alum Rock commercial corridor lays at the geographic center of the planning area. One and one-half miles west of the planning area, East Santa Clara is an important point of entry to Downtown San José.

Besides East Santa Clara and Alum Rock, commercial uses also line the Julian-McKee corridor, and portions of the McLaughlin-24th Street corridor. In addition, many industrial uses line the Union Pacific Railroad, which runs north-south, the largest of which is the "San Jose Steel" site, which lies between East Santa Clara and Julian, and just west of Highway 101. Many of these commercial and industrial uses are built at intensities that suggest future redevelopment in ways that enhance the community's livability.

As a whole, however, the planning area is predominantly residential. The housing stock of these neighborhoods varies greatly. In some areas, single-family homes predominate, while in other areas multi-family homes predominate. Still other areas have a mix of many types of housing. Neighborhoods are both pre-War with porch-front homes, as well as post-War with more of an emphasis on parking.

2. PLANNING PROCESS

In order to meet neighborhood improvement challenges, the City of San José, the San José Redevelopment Agency, and the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace community joined in a strategic planning process that established the shared vision that is embodied in this document. The planning process included many community meetings and a year and a half of hard work by community members, City staff, and planning consultants.

Specifically, a Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) representing a range of community interests guided the development of the *Improvement Plan*. As part of the city-wide Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (described after this section), a Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) was formed made up of residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders.

The Neighborhood Advisory Committee met regularly with City staff and planning consultants eighteen times over the course of the process. Steps within this planning process are highlighted below.

Initial Assessment

In November 2000, a walking tour of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area initiated the planning effort and provided preliminary impressions of the area. At the first community-wide workshop in January 2001, residents, business owners, and property owners identified assets (“things to cherish”), problems (“things to fix”), and opportunities (“things to add”). In addition, a report on existing conditions was developed by the consultant team and reviewed by the NAC and City departments. *Chapter II* contains a revised version of these “existing conditions”.

Principles for Transformation

NAC members took the lead identifying core values held by the community and incorporating those values within the *Principles for Transformation* (page III-1). Community comment refined these Principles further, to establish a firm foundation for future policies and decisions.

Revitalization Issues

The community was especially concerned about ways to improve the existing residential neighborhoods. Street lighting, street trees, illegal dumping, façade enhancements, and traffic-calming are among the many issues that were discussed. “Hands-on” mapping exercises provided the City with locations of special concern. This input forms the basis of *Chapter IV - Public Improvements* and *Chapter VI - Priorities and Actions*.

New Land Uses

Many existing strip commercial and industrial uses make poor neighbors to the area’s residential neighborhoods, and their low-intensity will make little economic sense as the area matures. During the second community-wide workshop held in April 2001, residents, business owners, and other interested individuals helped to identify opportunity sites for redevelopment and suggested preferences for future land uses. Patterns observed at the workshop became the basis of four land use alternatives, which were debated at NAC meetings. The result of this community input is embodied in the *Recommended Land Uses* (p.V-3).

The NAC and community members also discussed the relationship between building design and the ability to enhance the safety and livability of streets and parks. Their concerns and edits are incorporated with *Chapter V - Land Use & Building Guidelines*.

Priorities and Actions

At the third community-wide workshop held in December 2001, residents, business owners and other concerned individuals evaluated a full spectrum of actions that might improve the area. At the workshop, participants “voted” for their highest priorities. Workshop results provided a foundation for extensive debate at four NAC meetings to define the Top Ten Priorities and four On Deck Priorities. In the course of this debate, high-priority items were also defined with greater clarity.

Document Review and Adoption

Draft chapters of the *Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan* were reviewed by the NAC, City agencies and other interested individuals in the spring of 2002. At the June 2002 NAC meeting, final revisions were identified, before the *Plan* moved to the City Council for formal adoption.

On-Going Commitment

Through the course of this planning effort, hundreds of community members participated, not only within the regular structure of NAC meetings and workshops but also within special meetings on transit, on tree planting, on park design, and numerous other topics.

The civic volunteerism this effort represents is enormous. Yet, it is expected that community leadership will not end with the adoption of this *Plan*. Rather, this *Plan* is seen as an important beginning toward the on-going attainment of strong neighborhoods and a healthy community.

3. THE STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

To be successful, this *Plan* must direct action and resources in a way that coordinates the needs and aspirations of the community with the resources of the City of San José. Extensive participation and responsive implementation are critical and will further citywide goals:

- to listen to San José residents' ideas for neighborhood improvement,
- connect neighborhoods to resources, and
- respond to neighborhood priorities.

These goals are an integral part of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, launched in July 2000.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) is a partnership between the City Council, the Mayor, and San José residents and business owners to strengthen the City's neighborhoods. This initiative aims to improve neighborhood conditions, enhance community safety, improve community services, and strengthen neighborhood associations. The Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area is one of 20 planning areas in San José specified as a Strong Neighborhoods area.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative process is made up of two stages: planning and implementation. The planning stage includes: the development of individual neighborhood improvement plans (including this *Plan*); and the formation of a Redevelopment Project Area made up of all twenty SNI areas. This Redevelopment Project Area is necessary to leverage redevelopment funds

into neighborhood improvements. A Project Area Committee (PAC) representing all twenty neighborhood areas was assembled to oversee the development of the Redevelopment Plan. The PAC, which is required by Redevelopment law, is a committee of 52 members made up of residents, property and business owners, and representatives from community organizations. Thirty-five members (consisting of 13 home owners, 17 tenants and 5 business owners) were selected in at-large mail-in elections in March and April of 2001. The remaining seventeen members were appointed by the City Council from community organizations throughout the City. On June 12, 2001, the City Council confirmed all fifty-two PAC members, including four from the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area.

The implementation stage of the SNI process seeks to implement improvements proactively (such as revitalization projects, improved community services, and new development projects) to fruition.

SNI is funded through resources from the City of San José, the Redevelopment Agency, private investments, and public-private partnerships. However, the largest investment has come from the community members who have participated and will continue to participate in the creation of strong neighborhoods, to whom this document is dedicated.

